

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all previous versions and listing of claims, which were previously presented in the instant application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously presented) An internally threaded fastener assembly comprising:
a stemmed washer having a spring washer portion, a standoff portion integral with the spring washer portion, and a retaining portion extending inward from an outer perimeter of the spring washer portion; and
an internally threaded fastener having a peripheral flange, wherein the retaining portion of the stemmed washer extends over the peripheral flange to retain the fastener in the stemmed washer.
2. (original) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the spring washer portion is generally conical.
3. (original) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the spring washer portion extends from the standoff portion at an angle, wherein the spring washer portion is elastically deformable relative to the standoff portion.
4. (original) The assembly of claim 3, wherein the spring washer portion is biased to extend from the standoff portion at an acute angle.
5. (cancelled)
6. (original) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the fastener is rotatable with respect to the stemmed washer.

7. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the standoff portion forms a hollow right cylinder.

8. (original) The assembly of claim 1, wherein the standoff portion has a variable effective length.

9. (currently amended) An internally threaded fastener assembly comprising:
a threaded nut having a peripheral extension; and
a base, comprising:

a washer portion;

a standoff portion, wherein the washer portion extends outwardly from the standoff portion at an acute angle relative to the standoff portion; and

a retaining portion extending inwardly from the washer portion to capture the peripheral extension of the threaded nut between the retaining portion and the washer portion; and

a threaded bolt mated to the threaded nut, wherein the shaft of the threaded bolt extends through the standoff portion and a head of the threaded bolt abuts an outer end of the standoff portion at an outer end opposite from the washer portion.

10. (original) The assembly of claim 9, wherein the washer portion is generally conical.

11. (original) The assembly of claim 9, wherein the washer portion is elastically deformable from a first angle relative to the standoff portion to a second angle relative to the standoff portion.

12. (original) The assembly of claim 10, wherein the washer portion is biased toward the first angle relative to the standoff portion.

13. (original) The assembly of claim 9, wherein the standoff portion, the washer portion and the retaining portion form a single-piece structure.

14. (cancelled)

15. (previously presented) An internally threaded fastener assembly comprising:
an internally threaded fastener; and
a base, comprising:

a standoff portion;

a washer portion extending outward from the standoff portion at an angle, wherein
the washer portion is elastically deformable to enable the angle of the washer
portion to be varied relative to the standoff portion; and

a retaining portion extending inward from an outer perimeter of the washer portion
to form a cavity between the washer portion and the retainer portion to retain
the fastener and to enable the fastener to rotate relative to the base.

16. (original) The assembly of claim 15, wherein the washer portion is biased to a specific angle relative to the standoff portion.

17. (original) The assembly of claim 16, wherein the specific angle defines a range of variation in the effective length of the standoff portion.

18. (original) The assembly of claim 15, wherein the elastically deformable washer portion is generally conical.

19. (original) The assembly of claim 15, wherein the elastically deformable washer portion extends at an acute angle relative to the standoff portion.

20. (original) The assembly of claim 15, wherein the fastener is rotatable with respect to the base.

21. (previously presented) A method for making a fastener assembly, the method comprising:

providing an internally threaded fastener;
forming a base with a standoff portion and a washer portion extending outward from the standoff portion at an acute angle;
disposing the fastener on the washer portion; and
plastically deforming the washer portion radially inward to form a skirt portion to retain the fastener in assembly with the base.

22. (original) The method of claim 21, wherein the fastener includes a peripheral flange extending radially therefrom, and wherein the skirt portion is deformed to capture the peripheral flange.

23. (original) The method of claim 21, wherein the skirt portion is deformed with respect to the fastener to permit rotation of the fastener with respect to the base.

24. (original) The method of claim 21, wherein the skirt portion is plastically deformed by a crimping operation.

25. (original) The method of claim 21, wherein the standoff portion is formed to extend a predetermined length from the washer portion.

26. (original) The method of claim 21, wherein the standoff portion forms a hollow right cylinder.

27. (cancelled)

28. (currently amended) A fastened joint comprising:

a first member;

a second member;

a stemmed fastener, comprising:

a stemmed washer having a standoff portion, a spring washer portion integral with the standoff portion, and a retaining portion forming a cavity with the spring washer portion;

an internally threaded fastener retained in assembly with the stemmed washer by the retaining portion and the spring washer portion; and

an externally threaded fastener matingly engaged with the internally threaded fastener, the externally threaded fastener including a head;

wherein the standoff portion extends through the first and second members and the first and second members are fastened between the spring washer portion and the head of the externally threaded fastener, and

wherein the head abuts an outer end of the standoff portion at an outer end opposite from the spring washer portion, such that the standoff portion limits compression of the internally and externally threaded fasteners about the first and second members.

29. (original) The fastened joint of claim 28, wherein the spring washer portion is generally conical.

30. (original) The fastened joint of claim 28, wherein the spring washer portion extends from the standoff portion at an acute angle.

31. (new) The assembly of claim 1, comprising an externally threaded fastener having a threaded shaft configured to extend through the standoff portion and to mate with the internally threaded fastener, wherein the externally threaded fastener includes a head configured to abut an end of the standoff portion at an outer end opposite from the washer.

32. (new) The assembly of claim 15, comprising an externally threaded fastener having a threaded shaft configured to extend through the standoff portion and to mate with the internally threaded fastener, wherein the externally threaded fastener includes a head configured to abut an end of the standoff portion at an outer end opposite from the washer portion.

33. (new) The method of claim 21, comprising providing an externally threaded fastener configured to extend through the standoff portion and mate with the internally threaded fastener, wherein the externally threaded fastener includes a head configured to abut an end of the standoff portion at an outer end opposite from the washer portion.